

Human Health Risk Assessment (HHRA) - Flin Flon / Creighton Community Advisory Committee (CAC)

July 6, 2009 – Flin Flon City Hall
Meeting #11

Attendance

Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Membership					
Don Aasen Town of Creighton	X	Bev Hill NorMan Regional Health	X	Deb Odegaard FF&D Env't Council	X
Robert Bratvold Creighton School Board		Tom Lindsey Steelworkers Union		Bill Pauley Flin Flon School Division	
Katie Garinger General Public	X	Charlene Logan MCRRHA	X	Dave Price Green Project	X
Ian Cooper HBMS	X	Barb Lyons General Public		Bill Hanson City of Flin Flon	X
Cheryl Hordal General Public	X	Christa McIntyre Healthy Flin Flon	X		

Guests / Other		
Sheldon McLeod (Facilitator) S.L. McLeod Consulting	Shirley Neault (Recorder) HBMS	Elliot Sigal (via phone) Intrinsik Environmental
TAC Member (Observer) George Bihun SK Environment	Tom Goodman HBMS	Blair Jackson Goss Gilroy Inc.
TAC Member (Observer) Dave Bezak MB Conservation	Dr. Susan Roberecki (via phone) MB Health & Healthy Living	2 Public Observers
Dr. Lawrence Elliott NOR-MAN Health Region	1 Media Observer	

Introduction

- Facilitator Sheldon McLeod called the meeting to order and reviewed the agenda.
- A review of the draft notes of the previous meeting was conducted. The notes were approved.
- Action Items from the previous meeting were reviewed. The status of these action items is summarized in the tables at the end of these notes.

Member's Commentary – Community Feedback

- Each CAC member was given the opportunity to share what they are hearing in the community regarding the HHRA.
 - It is very quiet.
 - Not too many people seem worried, possibly due to low awareness. That may change as details about the evaluation of environmental exposure are released.

Status of HHRA - Independent Peer Review Process

Reference Documentation – July_6_2009 update to CAC

- Elliot Sigal of Intrinsik provided an update on the IERP meeting:
 - A panel of eight experts from across Canada and the US met for two days in Winnipeg to discuss and comment on the draft HHRA report and gauge the acceptability of the report.
 - The meeting was attended by all panel members, support staff from Toxicological Excellence in Risk Assessment (TERA), TAC observers (including a CAC observer of the TAC) and Intrinsik.

- The comments were constructive and supportive of the HHRA and no substantive issues were raised. Some adjustments to the risk models will occur as a result of the panel's comments.
- Some of the TAC observers present at the IERP meeting provided their impressions of the meeting:
 - The HHRA is quite conservative. The panel was supportive of the report. It is comforting to have experts confirm the process / research / methodology used in the HHRA.
 - The panel is knowledgeable and experienced. They asked some challenging questions and were very thorough and diligent.
 - Experts like the members from the US EPA provided valuable experience and insight.
- The final HHRA report should be available in early 2010. Following the IERP and consultation with the Provincial Health Departments, the TAC recommended that the environmental exposure study proceed.

Further Evaluation of Environmental Exposure

Reference Documentation – July_6_2009 update to CAC

- Blair Jackson from Goss Gilroy presented further information on the environmental exposure study. Highlights included:
 - The study will occur this fall. The study team will contact parents of children under 16 years of age from a random sample, explain the study, and then they will voluntarily choose to participate or not. Using this method of recruitment is to avoid statistical anomalies that could result from pockets of people volunteering from the same neighbourhood.
 - Urine and capillary blood (finger prick) will be collected from the volunteers and analyzed for lead, arsenic and inorganic mercury. Parents of children not selected for the study can still have their children tested for lead at their family doctor or the samples could be collected and tested without using those results in the study statistics.
 - Homes targeted through a review of census data will be phoned first, contacted by mail second and visited at home third, if necessary to increase interest in volunteering the children in those homes for the study. The initial communication will include potential symptoms, also to increase the parents' interest in participating.
 - A sample size of approximately 400 (out of 1200 local children) is the goal.
 - The local physicians have already been briefed as to the possible symptoms associated with exposure to the substances being tested for.
 - The questions circulated to the CAC members for comments and suggestions between this meeting and the last one were reviewed and clarifications gathered as necessary. The responses to the questions are proving quite helpful in learning more about the community and the expectations of the study.

Question: Have you considered testing pets associated with the kids being tested?

Response: No biological monitoring of pets is known to have been done in other studies but the pet factor will be considered via the parent interview questions.

Question: The behaviours of 6-year-olds are quite different than those of 16-year-olds, so will the data be helpful?

Response: The ability to analyse different age groups is desired, but the younger group is the obvious target group because of the effects that appear in that population, if any are present.

- The merits of offering honorariums were debated. There is some concern regarding the ethics of offering financial reward for participating in the study. Several other options were raised and included:
 - Offer to donate to a kids organization;
 - Provide vouchers for a percentage off of entry fees, dues, etc. for a child's activity;
 - Enter participant's names into a draw;

- Offer taxi or bus fares to transport parents and children to the clinic and child care at the clinic to allow the parent to be with the child being tested while the others wait for their turn.
- Possible methods for communication discussed included:
 - Offer a job through the Youth Employment Centre to place flyers on car windshields.
 - The mass mailing used for the food survey worked well. That method could be used again.
 - Add another page to the website for the environmental exposure study.
 - Interview-style story in The Reminder instead of a paid advertisement. The same thing could also be done at CBC North.
 - Burn all currently public information onto CDs and provide the CDs directly to households.
- The CAC members will see the communication package before it goes to the households so that the members are equipped to respond to questions.
- The ethics review is underway and comments are expected within the next two weeks. The peer review will start immediately following the ethics review. The detailed communication will start after both reviews are complete, allowing the details within the communications package to be amended, if necessary.
- The Communications Working Group (CWG) will be re-engaged following the peer review and once provided with the general plan from Goss Gilroy.

Question: How much detail can be told to the general public now?
 Response: As this is a public meeting, anything discussed here can be shared. Just keep in mind that the details could change.

Question: Should we re-publicize the names of the CAC members?
 Response: If the members agree, then publicizing the names is possible (the names are currently on the website and on the community display). The terms of reference (methodology) for the study could also be publicized. These should be ready by mid-August).

Comment: Indicating that the blood work will not be collected at the hospital but rather at clinics in the community may be a useful part of the communication.
 Response: Agreed.

Question: Does census data provide age categories?
 Response: Yes.

Question: Why aren't adults being tested if they are the ones that could have long-term effects from exposure?
 Response: The HHRA is not looking at effects but is rather determining if exposures exist because, if found, indicates that a risk management plan is needed to reduce exposures. Looking back is different than looking forward for forward prevention.

- The draft communication package will be sent to the CAC members during the last week of July for e-mail response (see actions 041 and 042)

#	Action	Responsibility	Target Date	Status
032	Offer suggestions for engaging the public when the final report is ready	CAC Members	2008-10-15	2008-06-17, new 2008-09-10, ongoing 2008-11-19, ongoing 2009-04-15, ongoing 2009-06-01, ongoing 2009-07-06, ongoing
036	Conduct a literature search to provide	Elliot Sigal	2009-06-03	2008-11-19, new

#	Action	Responsibility	Target Date	Status
	specific sites of other fish studies			2009-04-15, ongoing 2009-06-01, ongoing 2009-07-06, Complete*
039	Send questions re exposure study to Sheldon for distribution to CAC	Goss Gilroy	2009-06-04	2009-06-01, new 2009-07-06, Complete
040	Respond to questions from Goss Gilroy	CAC Members	2009-06-19	2009-06-01, new 2009-07-06, Complete
041	Send draft communications package to CAC members	Goss Gilroy / Sheldon McLeod	2009-07-31	2009-07-06, new
042	Comment on draft communication package	CAC Members	2009-08-07	2009-07-06, new

* Action completed while notes in preparation.

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, September 2, 2009 from 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm
Location: FF City Hall